Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An interface controller for managing operation of a plurality of devices at two or more properties via a wide area network, each of the devices belonging to one or more of a plurality of classes and having a unique communication protocol associated therewith, the interface controller comprising:

a network communications layer for communicating with the plurality of devices via the wide area network and a client application associated with the plurality of devices;

an information processing layer for communicating with the network communications layer, the information processing layer having a set of objects corresponding to each of the plurality of devices, the information processing layer also being for interacting with a data access layer on behalf of each of the plurality of devices using the corresponding objects, interaction between the information processing layer and the data access layer on behalf of each of the plurality of devices using the corresponding objects, interaction between the information processing layer and the data access layer on behalf of all of the plurality of devices being governed by a single set of rules; and

a property monitoring system coupled to the information processing layer, the property monitoring system generating a display that can include a user-selectable combination of device class and property.

2. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 1 wherein the network communications layer is configured to communicate with the client application using eXtensible Mark-up Language (XML) and the TCP/IP protocol.

3. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of 2 wherein the network communications layer is further configured to communicate with the client application using HTTP posts.

4. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 3 wherein an active server page layer is associated with the network communications layer for instantiating one of a plurality of network communications objects associated with the network communications layer in response to one of the HTTP posts from the client application.

5. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 1 wherein the network communications layer is configured to instantiate selected ones of the objects associated with the information processing layer in response to messages from the client application.

6. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 1 wherein each of the objects corresponding to each of the plurality of devices corresponds to a function to be performed by the information processing layer on behalf of the corresponding device.

7. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 6 wherein selected ones of the functions correspond to retrieval of information from a database by the information processing layer via the data access layer.

8. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 6 wherein selected ones of the functions correspond to communication with the corresponding device by the information processing layer via the network communications layer, the wide area network, and the client application.

9. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 8 further comprising a processing utility which instructs the information processing layer to communicate with the corresponding device in response to notification from an external system.

10. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 1 further comprising the data access layer which is collocated with the network communications layer and the information processing layer, and which facilitates interaction between the information processing layer and at least one associated database.

11. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 10 wherein the at least one associated database comprises a SQL database, the data access layer being configured to communicate with the SQL database.

12. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 10 wherein the at least one database comprises a plurality of databases each having its own unique format, the data access layer being configured to communicate with each of the databases according to the corresponding format.

13. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 1 wherein the information processing layer is configured to communicate with the data access layer and interact with at least one database associated therewith via the network communications layer and the wide area network.

14. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 13 wherein the single set of rules corresponds to the information processing layer.

15. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 13 wherein the single set of rules corresponds to the network communications layer.

16. (ORIGINAL) The interface controller of claim 1 wherein the devices comprise hospitality industry devices and the data access layer enables access by the information processing layer to a property management system.

17. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A client system for enabling management of the operation of a plurality of associated devices at two or more properties by a remote interface controller via a wide area network, each of the plurality of devices belonging to one or more of a plurality of classes and having a unique communications protocol associated therewith, the client system comprising a client application for communicating with each of the plurality of devices and the interface controller via the wide area network, the client application also being for

enabling the interface controller to interact with at least one database on behalf of all of the plurality of devices according to a single set of rules, the client application also for interfacing with a property monitoring system that can generate a display that can include a user-selectable combination of device class and property.

18. (ORIGINAL) The client system of claim 17 wherein a subset of the plurality of devices comprise serial devices, the client system further comprising a serial communications layer configured to facilitate communication between the client application and each of the serial devices.

19. (ORIGINAL) The client system of 17 wherein the client application is configured to communicate with the interface controller using eXtensible Mark-up Language (XML) and the TCP/IP protocol.

20. (ORIGINAL) The client system of 19 wherein the client application is further configured to employ HTTP posts to a server associated with the interface controller to communicate with the interface controller.

21. (ORIGINAL) The client system of claim 17 further comprising a network communications layer configured to facilitate communication between the client application and the interface controller via the wide area network.

22. (ORIGINAL) An information provider system for communicating with an interface controller via a wide area network, the interface controller being for managing operation of a plurality of devices at two or more properties via the wide area network, each of the devices belonging to one or more of a plurality of classes and having a unique communications protocol associated therewith, the information provider system comprising a data access layer and at least one database, the data access layer being configured to facilitate interaction by the interface controller with the at least one database on behalf of all of the plurality of devices according to a single set of rules, the data access layer also being configured to facilitate interaction by the interface controller with a property monitoring system that can

generate a display that can include a user-selectable combination of device class and property.

23. (ORIGINAL) The information provider system of claim 22 further comprising a network communications layer configured to facilitate communication between the data access layer and the interface controller via the wide area network.

24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A system for managing operation of a plurality of devices at a plurality of properties via a wide area network, each of the devices having a unique communication protocol associated therewith, the system comprising:

a client application for communicating with each of the plurality of devices;

a network communications layer for communicating with the plurality of devices via the wide area network an the client application;

an information processing layer for communicating with the network communications layer, the information processing layer having a set of objects corresponding to each of the plurality of devices, the information processing layer also being for interacting with a data access layer on behalf of each of the plurality of devices using the corresponding objects, interaction between the information processing layer and the data access layer on behalf of all of the plurality of devices being governed by a single set of rules; and

the data access layer for facilitating access by the objects associated with the information processing layer to at least one database, wherein data generated by each of the plurality of devices at each of the plurality of properties can be stored in the at least one database.

25. (NEW) The interface controller of claim 1 wherein the plurality of devices include one or more of a phone system, an entertainment/movie system, a security system, an environmental and energy management system, an accounting system, and a reservation system, and the property monitoring system generates a display that can include a user-selectable combination of device class and property for one or more of the devices.

26. (NEW) The client system of claim 17 wherein the plurality of devices include one or more of a phone system, an entertainment/movie system, a security system, an environmental and energy management system, an accounting system, and a reservation system, and the client system allows a user-selectable combination of device class and property for one or more of the devices to be managed at the remote interface controller.